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ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT CHAPEL HILL,

BEFORE

THE NORTH CAROLINA

INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION,

ON WEDNESDAY, JUNE 26, 1833,

THE DAY BEFORE THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE UNIVERSITY.

BY JOSEPH A. HILL, ESQ.

CHAPEL HILL,

Printed by ISAAC C. PATRIDGE, at the Harbinger Office.

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1833.



ADDRESS.

*Mr. President, &
Gentlemen of the Institute,*

I propose to submit a few thoughts upon the importance of a thorough Education, and upon the modes of discipline and instruction, which seem to me best adapted to that object. In our zeal for universal education, we have, I apprehend, withheld from this subject that degree of attention which its importance may justly claim. We have been less solicitous to learn how the youth of our country may be best trained to virtue, and instructed in wisdom, than to ascertain by what means the greatest number may be educated in the shortest time, and at the least expense. In adjusting a system of general and gratuitous instruction, the economy of time and money is certainly a consideration not to be overlooked. But the parent who would secure for his son the benefits of a complete education—who would have him carefully trained to virtue, and thoroughly imbued with learning, must be content to forego his claims upon his time, and to afford him the means of access to the best sources of knowledge. Nothing, indeed, is more to be deprecated than the anxiety, so often manifested, to abridge the period of instruction. It argues either an imperfect notion of what constitutes an education, or an insufficient estimate of its value. Is the time wasted which is devoted to the acquisition of knowledge?—Could it be more profitably employed, whether we consider the good of society, or the happiness of the individual, than in a course of instruction by which the mind is enriched with knowledge and trained to habits of correct thinking and assiduous application, or in a course of moral culture, by which the heart is improved—its affections cherished—its passions disciplined—its waywardness restrained? Whence then the anxiety to save time, as it is called? One would think that the child is sent to school, not in search of wisdom, but in reluctant conformity to a usage of society which the parent does not entirely approve, and yet wants firmness wholly to disregard; as the devotees of pleasure frequent our medicinal springs, not to imbibe their healing waters, but that they may not be excluded from the circles of fashion.

One would think too, from the rapidity with which the pupil is sometimes hurried through a course of instruction—from the marvellous short time in which a raw and ignorant boy becomes a ripe scholar and accomplished gentleman, that some of our modern pedagogues had discovered Mr. Shandy's "Northwest passage to the Intellectual World"—that they had found out that "Shorter way of going to work, by which the soul furnishes itself with knowledge and instruction"—in a word, that they had pursued his favourite system of education by the "right use and application of the auxiliary verbs," and that in this way the fabrick of an education is built up like Alladin's palace in a single night. The truth is, that ordinarily, in our country, too little time is devoted to Education—hence the reproach to American Scholarship, not altogether undeserved. Hence the few distinguished scholars, compared with the number of the nominally educated. A complete or thorough education is the result and the reward only of long and patient study, and of careful and judicious instruction. The devotee of Science must drink daily at the springs of knowledge—he cannot imbibe inspiration at a single draught—the flame will not kindle at the fountain of Dodona, by merely touching the waters. It will be perceived that my estimate of a thorough education comprehends a high degree of moral as well as intellectual cultivation. In this view of the subject, I shall be led to notice some things in our systems of school discipline which appear to me to require correction. Permit me to say that these observations, the result neither of long experience nor of much reflection, challenge little deference. They are intended merely as suggestions, which offered with diffidence, should be received with caution. An important defect, in most of our systems of school discipline and instruction is, that they are with difficulty adjusted to individual peculiarities of mind or character. The pupil is not unfrequently sacrificed to the dogma of his preceptor, who, adhering rigidly to some favourite scheme of education, refuses the slightest relaxation of his rule of discipline, or the least departure from his plan of instruction. The doctrine of Helvetius, that all are born with the same and equal capacities, tempers, and dispositions, would seem to be a favourite one with our modern teachers; for upon this metaphysical absurdity, are most of our systems of education founded. The same course of study is prescribed to each, the same rules of discipline enforced upon all, the same seed is sown, and the same tillage pursued upon every variety of soil. Boys of unequal capacities, and of minds in different degrees matured, are put together in a class. The slow is made to keep pace with the swift, not indeed in the acquisition of knowledge, for though they together describe the same circle and arrive at

the goal at the same instant of time, yet the one "in running has devoured the way" the other has been urged, blindfold, round the course. It is the object of an education which is to qualify the pupil for future usefulness, to make the preparatory course of discipline and instruction available to the end proposed. The teacher consulting the pupil's capacity and disposition, should adapt the plan of instruction to the intellectual and moral dimensions of the learner. The boy would then be daily rehearsing to his teacher, the part he is destined to play upon the great stage of life. It is not intended that regard should be had to the boy's wishes, or the estimate he may have made of his own abilities: that indeed would be to take counsel of caprice and vanity. It would never do to address to the schoolboy the advice of Tranio to his master:

The Mathematicks and the Metaphysicks,
Fall to them, as you find your stomach serves,
No profit grows where is no pleasure ta'en.
In brief, Sir, study what you most affect.

Youth is just that period when we are least capable of estimating the value of an education, and most impatient of the restraints of discipline. A disinclination of the taste, or an inaptitude of the genius, would be the frequent excuse for idleness, and the ready apology for the total neglect of some useful branch of education. A knowledge of all the subjects, usually taught in our schools, is deemed essential to a complete education—it is not proposed that any should be omitted or neglected. All that is intended to be urged, is that regard should be had to the admonitions of nature—to the indications of the mind. When Cicero inquired of the oracle what course of study he should pursue, the answer was, follow nature? When the inclination of the mind, and the tendency of the genius are clearly discovered, they should be followed as a rich vein of intellectual ore. When any particular talent is boldly developed, it ought to be carefully cherished and sedulously cultivated. The teacher, following the lead of nature, should be careful to incline the mind of the pupil to those studies, to encourage in him those habits of thought, and to pursue towards him that species of discipline and instruction which will be the best preparation for success in that department of human knowledge, in which his future labours promise the largest and most useful results. It is not, however, so much to the course of study, as to the government and discipline adopted in our schools, that your attention is solicited. It is respectfully suggested, whether in most of our primary schools, there be not a too frequent appeal to means, of a character too stimulating. Boys like men, it is true, are acted on most readily through their passions—they are most easily re-

strained by fear, and incited by ambition; but the most obvious are not always the best or safest means. Indeed, the great danger of the imprudent use of these means, arises from the fact that they are those which are nearest at hand, and first present themselves. In all strong governments, resort is too readily had to strong measures. He who can safely threaten, will seldom give himself the trouble to reason with a delinquent, and he who has the power to punish will rarely condescend to persuade. The pedagogue, within the narrow bounds of his little dominion, is as absolute as the most potent monarch upon earth. Hence the strong affinity which exists between the ferule, and the right hand of the pedagogue, and hence the practice of that species of palmistry so much in vogue in our schools. It may, with humility, be doubted whether the rod be that certain source of inspiration which seems to be supposed unrivaled in the art of teaching the interjections, Oh! Heu! and Proh! It may be questioned whether it can boast equal efficacy, in imparting a knowledge of the other parts of speech. Like the witch-hazel, it does indeed indicate the hidden formation, and like the rod of the prophet, the waters are sure to follow when its blows descend; but the true spring of inspiration, the Helicon of the mind, is beyond its divination. Let the pedagogue quiet his alarm, and forbear his indignation, if he can. I shall inculcate no treason against his authority; I am no foe to his "awful rule and right supremacy." I would not, if I could, wrench his birchen sceptre from his gripe. Admonished by my own sad experience, I would merely intercede in behalf of my young friends, for its less frequent and more discreet use. It may be, however, that my judgment is blinded, in this matter, by my feelings. I admit a sort of consciousness of certain early prejudices. This place has its associations, and has not failed to revive certain reminiscences, not of the most agreeable description. The very subject unavoidably renews the sad remembrance of those griefs,

"Quæque ipse miserrima vidi, et quorum pars magna fui."

I would appeal too to the self-love of the instructor; I would admonish him that by a too prodigal display of his power, he is creating around him, a host of little enemies, who are not without the means of mischief and annoyance. It is the glory of Socrates, that when condemned to die, his disciples crowded around him, eager to testify their affection, prompt to deplore his misfortune and to soothe his grief. It may be questioned, whether, should one of our modern teachers be condemned to drink the hemlock, his disciples would make as forward a display of their sympathies; the revengeful urchins would

I doubt, be apt to applaud the justice of his sentence, and consider the infusion of hemlock, a fair return for the unmerciful doses of birch or chinquapin, administered to themselves. One of the worst effects of corporal punishments is, that it has a tendency to estrange the pupil from his master. Too much severity chills affection and repels confidence: The boy soon learns to hate, what he has been taught to fear; the dread of punishment prompts him to seek impunity, in the concealment of his delinquencies; he gradually loses the amiable ingenuousness proper to his years. His frank spirit catches the taint of hypocrisy, and his open brow is covered with a frightful mask of falsehood and deceit. He who has early learned to practice the arts of deception, and to draw a veil over his motives and his conduct, can scarcely be expected, in after life, to illustrate the virtues of truth and candour. Whether the character may not be permanently debased, by accustoming the mind to the influence of so base a motive as fear, and whether it be prudent to familiarize it with a mode of punishment, which, in all well regulated communities, is appropriated to the most odious offences, and the infliction of which is followed by social degradation, are questions which invite the earnest enquiry and ought to engage the anxious reflection, of all those to whose care is committed the education of youth. If corporal punishment must be retained as a part of school discipline, it should at least be regarded as a dangerous remedy, to which resort should be had, only in extreme cases; it should be reserved as the penalty for moral delinquencies, as the correction for vices, of a character incorrigible by other means.

It is further suggested, whether some motive to exertion might not be substituted, of a character less equivocal, and of a tendency less dangerous, than the spirit of emulation, or rather, whether appeals to this spirit are not made too frequently, and with too little caution.—The teacher who seeks to awaken this spirit in his pupil, runs the risk of rousing passions, in close alliance with it, and of the very worst character—such as envy, hatred, and the spirit of detraction. A spirit of rivalry, in a long course of competition, is apt to be aggravated into a feeling of hostility, and the opponent comes, at length, to be regarded as an enemy. He, whose example we are bid to emulate, who is often exhibited in injurious contrast to ourselves, whose merit is made the reproach of our unworthiness, whose success frustrates our hopes, and disappoints our ambition—he, in a word, who impresses us with the painful sense of inferiority, will, unless we are watchful of our motives, and keep a guard upon our passions, become an object of envy, and a subject of detraction. Hurt vanity, and mortified self-love, will prompt the disingenuous wish to lessen the merit we have

in vain essayed to equal. These effects of a vicious system of education, frequently betray themselves even in youth, the period of candid sentiment and generous feeling; and the young bosom which should be taught to throb only with virtuous emotion, becomes the theatre of contending passions. In after-life, when as the objects of competition are of greater value, the eagerness of desire is increased, and the pang of disappointment more keenly felt, they assume an aspect of darker malignity, and a form more disgustingly hateful. They sometimes mingle in the strife for noble objects, and characters of otherwise exalted worth, are degraded by the littleness of envy and the meanness of jealousy.

There is another error, which, though not so general as to be fairly considered inherent in our systems of school discipline, is yet sufficiently common to deserve notice and reprehension. It consists in a misrepresentation of the objects and purposes of education, and may be defined to be the suggestion to the learner of a false motive to exertion. The eminences of fame, the heights of power, the applause of contemporaries, and the plaudits of posterity, whatever can flatter vanity or awaken ambition, is presented to the notice of the pupil, and proposed to him as the certain reward of industry and assiduity.— There cannot be a more pernicious error. Its effects upon the character of the individual and upon society, are indeed, deplorable. The youth, so soon as he becomes capable of observation and reflection, detects the fallacy of the hopes with which his mind has been filled; he discovers that the rewards which have been proposed as certain, are impossible; that the objects at which he has been taught to aim, must remain forever beyond his reach. Hope dies within him, and his exertions relax. Upon the failure of one motive, a more correct but less stimulating one may fail to reanimate his courage. If the delusion be sustained until he has completed his collegiate course, so soon as he enters upon the great stage of life, it is sure to be dispelled. He then discovers that fame must, from the nature of things, be the lot of a very few, and that his must be the fate of the predecessors of Agamemnon—

*Vixere fortes ante Agamemnona,
Multi; sed omnes illacrymabiles
Urgentur ignotique longa
Nocte."*

He yields to the feeling of despondency, which succeeds the excitation of hope, and refusing to attempt even that which he has the ability to accomplish, finds in retirement obscurity indeed, but not contentment: Or, worse still, losing the motive of a lofty ambition, abandoning the

pursuit of those higher objects which are seldom sought, because they can never be won but by honourable means, and too long accustomed to the high excitement of stimulating motives, to acknowledge the influence of more moderate hopes. He becomes an unprincipled demagogue; a restless intriguer for petty power and ephemeral distinction; the parasite of power, the flatterer of the people, the pander to prejudice, the advocate of error, acknowledging no principle but expediency, no feeling but selfishness! A politicalameleon, changing his complexion with the changing hue of the times. Behold him a Law-giver, illustrating by the vacillations of his unprincipled policy, the description which the poet gives us of one of the worst characters of antiquity,

Vendidit hic auro, patriam, dominum que
Imposuit, fixit leges pretio, atque refixit.—*Virg. B. 6. 621.*

serving no other purpose than to indicate the caprices of power or the eccentricities of popular whim. If you would not, that these sad effects disclose themselves in the man, deal fairly by the boy. Suggest to him no false motive, let there be no misrepresentation of the purposes, no exaggeration of the advantages of education, let him be told all the good that knowledge rightly used will accomplish for him; that by enlarging his mind and extending his views, it will increase his capacities for happiness, and multiply to him the sources of innocent enjoyment, that education, though it be auxiliary to the acquisition of power and fame, is not proposed as a certain means of becoming powerful and distinguished, but that habits of industry, correct principles, and upright conduct, will certainly be rewarded in after life, by usefulness, respectability, and happiness. If, indeed, the preceptor discovers in the mind of his pupil those rare qualities which afford a fair promise of future eminence, and if the youth feel within himself, the stirring of that divine 'afflatus,' without which, Cicero tells us, no man can be great, let him

"Take the instant way
For Honour travels in a strait so narrow
Where one but goes abreast; keep then the path;
For Emulation hath a thousand sons,
That one by one pursue: If he give way,
Or hedge aside from the direct forth-right,
Like to an entered tide, they all rush by,
And leave him hindmost."

Troi & Cressidæ.

To discipline the mind, and form the character of such a youth, is at once a most interesting and responsible duty. The preceptor should be careful to incline his heart to virtue, and to direct his ambition to

proper objects; to lay the foundation of the future greatness of his pupil in generous sentiments and sound principles; the young aspirant should be persuaded, that if he would be remembered, after the laurel has faded from his brow, and the brow itself become cold; if he would have the sound of his fame heard by future ages and the plaudits of his cotemporaries caught and repeated by succeeding generations, he must consent to forego the indulgence of passion, and learn to resist the seductions of vice and the allurements of pleasure. He must be taught to distinguish between notoriety and fame, and be constantly reminded that the only access to the temple of Fame is through that of Honour. Men are forgotten, not because the inscription is erased from the monument—but because they have not deserved to be remembered,—because they have formed a false estimate of the qualities of true greatness. They listen to flattery, and call it praise; they sacrifice to vanity and think they worship fame; they think rather of what will procure applause, than of what will deserve it.—They regulate their conduct by their immediate interests, or by the wishes, the passions or the prejudices of their cotemporaries, and without reference to the standard, by which posterity will judge it. He, who would weave around his brow an unfading chaplet, who would surround his name with the halo of true glory, must be taught moderation, self-command, reverence of God, love of his fellow-men. He must learn to distinguish between that which is just, and that which is merely expedient,—he must be accustomed to scrutinize his motives and his actions, and to judge them by the invariable standard of right. If he be taught this in youth, in after life, he will rarely be betrayed by false motives, into wrong actions; he will seldom do wrong, from a wish always to do right,—he will avail himself of every opportunity to do good, and avoid every temptation to do evil,—he will have courage to act, where action will be useful and prudence to forbear, when action would be mischievous,—and thus, he will deserve praise not only for what he does, but for what he forbears to do. He need not trust to win an epitaph—his actions will be his records; each benefit he confers upon his kind, will be a monument to his glory. Posterity will cherish his fame, because he is a benefactor to posterity; it will recount his story, because it teaches golden lessons of wisdom, and affords a glorious example, to imitate, and a safe light to follow.

In what way, it may be asked, is the instructor to counteract the seductions of pleasure, or to overcome the love of ease, and the vis inertia of indolence, if he can neither compel the fears, nor incite the ambition of his pupil? It is certainly much easier to detect defects,

than to provide their remedies, to repudiate a system than to originate a plan.

It might be sufficient to remark, that the extinction of the passions, against the encouragement of which I have ventured to protest, need not be apprehended. Their aid will not be withheld from the instructor: Boys will continue to be influenced by the fear of shame, and to be incited by the spirit of rivalry, though direct appeals to these passions be forborne. Without intending to propose a plan of discipline, I may venture to remark, that if the teacher would be more of the assistant and less of the taskmaster, more ready to advise and less prompt to punish, his labours would in the end, be more profitable to the pupil and less irksome to himself. If he would be more with the student, while engaged in preparing his lesson, the recitation would be less frequently an exhibition of ignorance on the one part and a trial of temper on the other. A boy of generous mind enters upon the pursuit of knowledge, with an eagerness of hope, and an avidity of desire, which, if carefully cherished, will constitute a sufficient motive to exertion. But this "*vivida vis animi*" is frequently palsied in the very outset. Difficulties, the nature of which the boy cannot comprehend, and the means of surmounting which, he does not perceive, present themselves at every step of his career. To his affrighted fancy, 'Hills peep o'er Hills, and Alps on Alps arise.' His courage fails and hope dies within him. How different would be the result, if the teacher would place himself at the side of the pupil, and become his guide and companion, pointing him the way, aiding him in his difficulties, animating his hopes and reviving his courage. "Whatever," says Johnson, "enlarges hope exalts courage," let the teacher then cherish in his pupil the hope of success; let him be careful to inspire him with the sentiment of the competitors in the Trojan games.

"Possunt, quia, posse, videntur."

Let him be reminded, that if the toil be great, the reward is sure; that though the Hill of science, like the mountain of Black-stones in the Arabian Tales, presents a rugged aspect and is ascended by an obscure path, yet upon its summit, are the fruit tree and the fountain and beyond, a scene of fairy enchantment opens upon the charmed and delighted eye. The rewards of assiduity, it is true, are too distant, to exert a very powerful influence upon the conduct of a youth of eager hopes and impatient desires, who demands immediate results and longs to taste the fruit of the tree of knowledge. The faculties must be subjected to those severe exercises, which can alone give them strength and hardihood. But this preparatory course of mental discipline, though necessarily irksome, may yet be relieved of much of

its dryness. A teacher of well-informed mind, of cultivated taste and lively genius, may impart a degree of animation and interest, to the dulllest school exercise. Let the day's lesson be made the subject of an oral lecture,—Let the teacher illustrate the author's idea, point out to the pupil the justness of the thought, the beauty of the style, the aptitude of the simile, explain the allusion; comment on the sentiment, enforce the moral; and the youth, who has toiled to ascertain the meaning of words, and to discover their government and relation to each other, will acknowledge, that his day's labour has been abundantly rewarded. He will be sensible, that he has made an acquisition to his little stock of knowledge. His mind will exult in the new light, which has been shed upon it. His exertions will no longer be the reluctant, because unrewarded labour of the slave, but resemble rather the eager and animated industry of him, who discovers amid the barren earth, which his spade turns up, the shining particles of a precious ore. The whole difference consists in teaching words, with or without reference to the thoughts they embody. Let the course of instruction be altered—let it not be forgotten that the pupil is a being of fancy and feeling, and let it be the care of the teacher to inflame the one and interest the other. If the day's lesson affords a striking image, a sound moral, or a noble sentiment, let him be required to give to the passage, a written translation, or it may be to turn it into English verse, to make it the theme of a composition or the subject of a paraphrase. He will thus have obtained a right of property in the thought, and to the notion of property, the desire of acquisition will succeed. His studies will no longer be regarded as a forced exercise, but as a pursuit of pleasure, and he who has turned with disgust from the pages of the ancient poets and orators, as the prescribed subjects of odious task, will consult them with eagerness, as a means of instruction and a source of gratification. Our school reading of the classics is too limited, and the knowledge we acquire of them too imperfect to inspire us with a love of, or a taste for classical literature. Who of us is not ready to confess that he is indebted to Dryden and Pope for his earliest relish for Virgil and Homer, and for his first perception of the beauties of those authors. By the present mode of instruction in the classicks, the pupil is deprived of one of the great benefits of education,—the innocent pleasure to be derived from the cultivation of the taste, and a perusal of the best authors of antiquity. It is true he has access to the treasures of English literature, but an acquaintance with the ancient is essential to a thorough knowledge and a perfect relish for the beauties of the modern classicks. This knowledge and this taste are means of gratification which we

may be said to hold independently of the vicissitudes of fortune. They open to us a source of innocent pleasure, to which we have access at all times and under all circumstances.

"Hæc studia adolescentiam alunt, senectutem oblectant, secundas res ornant, adversis solatium et perfugium præbent; delectant domi, non impediunt foris, pernoctant nobiscum, peregrinantur, rusticantur."

Cicero. 4

What we now make the elegant amusement or the instructive exercise of our vacant hours, may hereafter constitute a solace for our age and a refuge of our misfortunes; when all other sources of enjoyment fail us, when the mind instructed by disappointment detects the sophistry of hope, and the heart wounded in its affections refuses to yield to the solicitations of friendship, or the blandishments of love; the devotion to letters will remain; and in the indulgence of this passion of the mind in the cultivation of the taste, and in the pursuit of knowledge, in the fictions of poetry and the truths of philosophy, we may find that pleasure and consolation, elsewhere sought in vain. Nor should we be unmindful that there is an old age of the mind as of the body, against which it is the part of prudence to provide, that there is a period of mental imbecility as of corporeal decay, when the wavering attention and the trembling hand alike refuse their ministry,—when the darkened eye gathers no light to guide or illumine, and the deafened ear conveys no sound to admonish or instruct. In a word, that there is a period, when the mind deserted by its corporeal allies the senses, is cast upon its own resources, and without the power of further acquisition must feed upon its collected stores or perish. In this season of intellectual night, when no light is let in upon the mind from without, the treasured thought, the recollected fact, the golden lesson of wisdom early learned and carefully treasured, like those gems which disclose their lustre in the dark, will diffuse a cheerful light through the mind, and dispel its gloom. These, it is true, are considerations not likely to have much influence upon the young; we can scarcely persuade ourselves to think of the future, with any provident foresight to its wants. While we are conscious of unimpaired faculties, of undiminished capacities for pleasure, we can with difficulty realise that the period approaches when we must cease to be young. We look forward to old age as to a cold and inevitable, but as we flatter ourselves, a distant season, which is to come upon us indeed, but not until we have passed a spring of exulting hope and exhausted the rich fruits of a glorious summer and a mellow autumn. But this dark period, which is seen by us as afar off, is even now at hand.

Lo! while we give the unregarded hour,
 To wine and revelry, in pleasures' bower;
 The noiseless foot of time steals swiftly by
 And e're we dream of manhood, age is nigh.

Gifford Fam. Serv.

I willingly quit a subject, with regard to which I am every moment liable to be betrayed by ignorance into error, and in discussing which before such an audience, I commit the folly of him, who ventured to discourse of war, in the presence of Hannibal. I am aware of having trespassed already too far upon your patience, but as I may be expected to say something on the subject of general education, and as I would not willingly by silence, on an occasion like this, expose myself to the suspicion of being averse to the efforts which are making to promote a universal diffusion of the benefits of education, I must ask your indulgence a few moments longer. He indeed, who does not participate in the hopes excited by the ardent zeal every where manifested by the enlightened lovers of mankind, to meliorate the condition and to elevate the character of man, and who feels no wish to aid in so glorious an enterprise, is far behind the spirit of the age and there is indeed much to encourage our hopes and animate our exertions,—whether we consider the chances of success, or the results, which are to reward it. The attention of the wise and good is every-where directed, with unceasing interest to this great object. These unremitting exertions are rapidly conciliating the favour and quickening the zeal of the public in its behalf,—while the political changes, which have occurred or are in progress, in many parts of the world, afford to the philanthropist, the assured and pleasing hope of its ultimate accomplishment. Our own country presents the fairest field for the successful trial of this great experiment. The political institutions of most other countries oppose an obstacle to its success, which is not encountered here. Under most of the political systems of ancient institution, there is supposed to exist an adversary interest, between the few, who exercise power and the many who are its subjects. Knowledge is power and the timidity or jealousy of the ruler, has suggested the selfish policy of keeping the subject in ignorance; every avenue to knowledge is carefully closed against him, and science can dart into his mind only an occasional and broken beam, through some forgotten or unguarded aperture. Under such governments, the maxim is, that knowledge is *not* for the poor. *Here*, to deny to the citizen the right to be instructed, to refuse to him the light of knowledge, would be deemed an act of scarce less wickedness and folly than to shut him out from the glorious light of Heaven. *Here*, no state policy, no supposed governmental necessity oppose themselves to the education of the people. On the

contrary, under a government of popular institution, of which the people are not only the authors, but as to many important functions, the agents, "it is essential that public opinion should be enlightened."—Accordingly we find the views of the statesman, in accordance with the wishes of the Philanthropist. The policy of the one recommends what the benevolence of the other has suggested. The one perceives, in the general diffusion of the blessings of education, the best security for the happiness of the citizen, the other, the surest guarantee for the stability of the government.

This subject is also full of interest to the lover of science: It fills his mind with the most shining hopes; he beholds, in the promised developement and the consequent concentration of the intellectual power of mankind, the mighty instrument, by which Philosophy is to achieve new wonders. When we reflect on all that mind has accomplished, on the secrets it has revealed, on the truths it has discovered; when we think of all it has achieved in science, in philosophy, in the arts, in every department of human knowledge, and when we remember that the energies of the power which has accomplished so much, are unimpaired, that a comparatively small amount of that power has been exerted in the production of these results, we find much to embolden hope and animate exertion. When too, we reflect that we must still be far from the limit of human knowledge, that there are many things in heaven and earth not dreamt of in our philosophy, that nature has secrets not yet revealed, precious truths as yet undiscovered, that she has haunts to which she has never been pursued, unexplored recesses where treasures of knowledge are hid;—when we call to mind, that of the books of the Sybil, we have seen but three; and that of the vast volume which Nature opens before us, many leaves remain to be read; the mind is filled with bold thoughts and ardent hopes! If so much has been accomplished by a divided power, what might not have been achieved, by the universal mind, exerted under more favourable circumstances. But a more practical enquiry suggests itself: Over the past we can exercise no control, but upon the future we may exert an influence. When so much remains to be done, what may not we and our posterity accomplish, if acting upon the admitted truth, that the magnitude of the result is in proportion to the power employed, we are careful to develop all the resources of the human mind, and array all the intellectual strength of mankind? Is it presumptuous to predict that we may greatly enlarge the boundaries of human knowledge? Our predecessors are our pioneers in science, we easily advance to the position, to which they have opened the way; we begin our search after truth, at the point where their discoveries terminate, with the princi-

ples they established as our auxiliaries, and the lights they kindled as our guides. Who can doubt that Philosophy is destined to achieve new triumphs, that she is to discover new and mighty truths? Of the nature of these truths, we must be ignorant, but of their existence we cannot doubt. We know that there is immense space beyond the horizon which bounds our sight, and we know too that as we approach this apparent limit of human vision, it retires, never indeed enlarging its circle, but adopting at each remove, a new centre and circumscribing a new portion of space. As we proceed, new prospects open before us, and new objects are presented for our observation. So as we advance in knowledge, truths always existent, but hitherto unseen, will pour their light into the mind, as from time to time, the radiance of some new star reaches us, after a flight of ages, and looking up, we behold a new glory kindled in the heavens.

Finis.



